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European Patent Office - Gitschiner Str. 103
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BERLIN

PCT CHAPTER II

Re: Agent's File Reference A3-205 PCT
International Patent Application No. PCT/US03/36952
International Filing Date: 19 November 2003
Priority date: 19 November 2002
IMPROVED MEMORY CARD CONNECTOR

ARTICLE 34 RESPONSE TO THE WRITTEN OPINION ISSUED UNDER RULE 66

Dear Sirs:

This communication is in response to the Written Opinion issued under PCT Rule 66 and mailed on 08 November 2004. Substitute sheets 13 and 14 containing amended claims 1-8 are attached hereto for considerations and examination by the Examiner. This response is being transmitted by facsimile and a confirmation copy of this letter is being sent to the EPO by Express Mail.

In the Written Opinion, the Examiner indicated that "[t]he present application does not meet the criteria of Article 33(1) PCT, because the subject-matter of the claims 1-4 is not new in the sense of Article 33(2) PCT." Furthermore, the Examiner indicated that claims 5-8 do not contain any features which meet the requirements of the PCT in respect of novelty and/or inventive step. Accordingly, in view of the Opinion, applicant has amended claim 1 and added two new claims (present claims 4 and 5) further defining the detent sockets (20) of the subject memory card connector.

Specifically, claims 1-4 were identified as not being novel in view of US 5,320,552 (D1). Independent claim 1 has thus been amended to distinguish over D1 by incorporating the subject matter of claim 5 thereinto, i.e. that the *cover (6) is stamped and formed of sheet metal material, and said spring arms (10) are resilient to self-bias the pivot projections (12) thereon into the pivot sockets (18) and the detent sockets (20) in the mounting portions (4c) of the housing*. This structure is not shown in D1. Moreover, this structure is not shown in any of the prior art references cited in the Search Report. Applicant once again invites the examiner to identify where it is disclosed that the cover is fabricated of metal. The considerations, features and problems of a metal cover design for a memory card connector are completely different from a dielectric cover, particularly when the cover is subject to movement, including rotation and flexure.



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With respect to new claims 4 and 5, these claims further distinguish applicant's design, and particularly the detent sockets (20) of the housing, from the housing disclosed in D1. Contrary to applicant's detent sockets being located *rearwardly* of the pivot sockets, the detent sockets in D1 are located *forwardly* of the pivot sockets. Furthermore, there is no teaching in D1 that the pivot sockets could be *semi-conical* to save both space and money on the housing.

Accordingly, it is applicants' opinion that the rejection of the claims in view of reference D1 is now overcome. In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the relevancy of the cited reference D1 and reissue a favorable detailed examination.

Very truly yours,

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CLAIMS

1. A memory card connector (1) for receiving a memory card (2) having a plurality of conductive contacts (2a), comprising:
an insulating housing (4);
a plurality of conductive terminals (16) mounted on the housing;
a cover (6) having receptacle means (6f) for receiving the memory card;
and

a pivot-detent mechanism (8) operatively associated between the cover and the housing and movably mounting the cover to the housing, including

pivot means (12,18) comprising a pivot socket (18) in one of the cover (6) and housing (4) for receiving a pivot projection (12) on the other of the cover and the housing, engageable between the cover (6) and the housing (4) to mount the cover for pivotal movement between an open position to allow the memory card (2) to be received on the cover and a closed position bringing the contacts (2a) of the memory card into engagement with the terminals (16) on the housing, and

detent means (12,20) including a detent socket (20) separate from and independent of said pivot socket (18) for receiving said pivot projection, engageable between the cover and the housing (4) to allow the cover (6) to slidably move from said closed position to a latched position, a portion (12) of said pivot means (12,18) providing a dual function of forming a portion (12) of said detent means (12,20),

wherein said housing (4) is generally flat and mounts the terminals (16) in a generally side-by-side array and includes a pair of mounting portions (4c) at opposite sides thereof, and said cover is generally flat and the receptacle means includes a mouth (6f) at one end of the cover for insertion of the memory card (2) thereinto, the cover having a pair of spring arms (10) at an opposite end thereof and juxtaposed alongside said pair of mounting portions (4c) of the housing, said pivot-detent mechanism (8) being operatively associated between the mounting portions (4c) of the housing and the spring arms (10) of the cover,

and wherein said cover (6) is stamped and formed of sheet metal material, and said spring arms (10) are resilient to self-bias the pivot projections (12) thereon into the pivot sockets (18) and the detent sockets (20) in the mounting portions (4c) of the housing (4).

2. The memory card connector of claim 1 wherein the detent sockets (20) define the latched position of the cover.

3. The memory card connector of claim 1 wherein said detent projections (12) are generally cone-shaped.

4. The memory card connector of claim 2 wherein the detent sockets (20) are located rearwardly of the pivot sockets (18).

5. The memory card connector of claim 1 wherein the detent sockets (20) are semi-conical.

6. The memory card connector of claim 1 wherein said cover (6) includes a cover plate (6a) spanning an area between said spring arms (10) and a pair of side walls (6b) defining opposite sides of said receptacle means (6f).

7. The memory card connector of claim 6, including latch means (6c,24a) between the side walls (6b) of the cover (6) and opposite sides of the housing (4) and automatically engageable when the cover slides to said latched position.

8. The memory card connector of claim 7 wherein said latch means comprises latching flanges (6c) formed inwardly from said side walls (6b) of the cover (6) and slidable under latching flanges (24a) at opposite sides of the housing (4) when the cover slides to said latched position.